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ABSTRACT

This document is a leader's guide for conducting a course in improving self-esteem for mature middle- and upper-class women. After a section on characteristics needed by group leaders and pointers on conducting group discussions, the document contains lesson plans for eight discussion-group lessons. Topics covered during the eight sessions include the following: the importance of a positive self-image; discovering the roots of the self-image; putting yourself in control; the importance of honest communication; putting male relationships in the proper perspective (2 sessions); overcoming fears; and putting it all together. Each lesson plan contains exercises for participants, handouts, and tips for the group leader. Optional pre- and posttests for evaluating the course are included in an appendix to the document. (KC)

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ED198377

THE WOMAN WITHIN

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PREFACE

Several years ago, when I was experiencing what today is termed the 30's crisis and questioning everything in my life, my sister recommended I read a book entitled Psycho-Cybernetics by Maxwell Maltz.* The experience of reading that book started me on an adventure that continues to this day. The adventure led to the discovery of the influence self-image has on individuals and how an improved self-image can change a person's life. The study and application of the principles have helped me tremendously in my own search for a meaningful, productive life. They have also enabled me to help other women develop their talents and become more satisfied human beings.

Following what is now considered the typical 30's pattern, I made a career change about a year after I began applying the positive self-image principles to my life. After ten years of teaching elementary school children I began working in adult education. It was my first experience dealing with adult women. Certain aspects of their behavior became evident to me. When in a group by themselves, they spoke well, expressed opinions and were generally relaxed. These same women, when in a group with men, were timid, unwilling to express opinions, and generally had feelings of inadequacy. It was this observation that led me to the development of the self-image course outlined in this manual. I felt that with a little help, women could learn to respect their own opinions and express them in a group of both men and women.

When I was designing the course, my approach was to identify and discuss ways of changing the self-image and then to deal with specific behavioral changes individuals wanted to make.

My belief in this approach is reinforced every time a woman comes into a session and proudly announces that she has finally stopped someone from taking advantage of her, or has developed the initiative and applied for the job she wanted, etc. I have received many letters six months to a year after women have taken the course. They are anxious to share with me some positive experience they have had. They attribute these events to the fact that they have been introduced to the principles of building a positive self-image.

The material was designed originally for middle- and upper-middle-class women. The topics chosen for discussion and examples given are all relevant to their situation.

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*Maxwell Maltz, M.D. Psycho-Cybernetics (New York: Pocket Books, 1973).

The basic principles are applicable to everyone. However, some adaptations are necessary for specific populations.

My hope is that through using this manual, many more women will come to realize their full potential and thus become happier, emotionally healthier human beings, able to acknowledge and take pride in their past contributions to society, and confident that they will continue to make those contributions in an ever-widening sphere.

Lorraine Rea

PORTRAIT OF A GROUP LEADER

What sort of woman makes an effective group leader?

There are many facets to an effective group leader. One of the most important ones is that she believes in the material being presented; that she has been able to apply the principles to her own life and found them effective. She cannot light a fire under others unless it burns within herself. It is helpful if she has taken the course and then given herself a few months to apply the principles to her own situation.

She should be a woman that other women will look up to, saying "I would like to be like her." Women usually admire someone who has energy, seems satisfied with her life and is emotionally healthy.

If the leader comes in disorganized and unprepared, it is a turnoff. The same is true if she spends half the time talking about herself and her problems rather than listening to the participants in the group. The most effective leader will keep any discussion about herself to a minimum. She will not use the group as a source of therapy for herself.

A woman who has unresolved problems dealing with men does not make a good leader. Her job is to help women deal more effectively with men, not build walls between themselves and the male population. If the leader is resentful, she may prevent the group members from resolving issues regarding their own relationships.

It is very important that the leader not impose her preference for a certain life style on the group members. Above all, she must respect the role of homemaker and mother. Many women are feeling tension because they want to stay home and raise a family, but society is telling them they should be out working. The object of the group is to help each woman feel more comfortable about the choices she has made for herself. It is not the leader's job to put a value on a certain life style and try to impose it on the group.

Leaders must be patient and realize that many women will leave the group without resolving personal issues or even admitting to themselves that they have problems. The contract the leader has with participants is to impart information and to create a learning situation in which participants can gain insight into how they apply those principles to their own lives. Since this is not a therapeutic situation, the participants do not contract to change their actions in any way.

This means that the leader should not spend extensive time with individuals trying to resolve tough issues. If the women need more help than can be provided in a group, they should be referred for private counseling.

Last but not least, an effective group leader should be a woman who has some life experience behind her. If she is too young and inexperienced she will have difficulty relating to the women, many of whom will be in mid-life. A woman who is past thirty is really desirable.

The personality of the leader is extremely important and much of the success of the group depends on it.

Leading groups can be very satisfying and a source of personal growth for the woman who is herself a secure individual, psychologically mature and ready to help others along the path of personal development.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

The group process explained in this manual works best with a group of 15 to 20. If the group is too small, interaction among the women will be lacking. If the group is larger, the leader cannot control the process.

The material works with women of any age. A group can be successful with women of various ages interacting. The leader should, however, make an effort to use examples that apply to her group members when she is making a point.

Women who have been in some type of therapy and are making progress often find the group helpful. It acts as a reinforcer for them. It has also been used successfully with inpatients.

The requirements are the ability to:

1. read and write
2. think logically
3. communicate verbally

The effectiveness of each session depends on presenting the material in the order in which it is written and on not omitting the concluding exercises. It is therefore important for the leader to be aware of time. She should not allow the participants to get off on tangents, nor should she spend a lot of time resolving the problems of one woman.

Each session usually lasts from 1 1/2 to 2 hours. If the sessions extend for a longer period of time, the effect can be lost.

If the leader is concerned about any one woman, she can speak with that participant privately after the session. This process often gives the participant the courage to admit deeper problems and to ask for help.

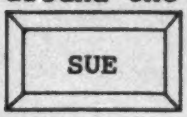
SESSION I

THE IMPORTANCE OF A POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE

Get-Acquainted Exercise. Seat the women around small tables in groups of four or five. Provide small index cards and crayons or colored markers for name tags.

You should introduce yourself, encourage the women to relax, and let them know that this is going to be a time just for them. They should try to forget the problems of their children, jobs, husbands, etc. They are here to think about their own development. This course is a present they give themselves.

Ask each woman to choose a color of crayon that best describes the mood she is in today. Ask her to put a frame around the name tag, using that color, and to print her name in the middle of the tag. Have each participant describe why she chose the color and why she came to the group.



Presentation. Each session contains some content that is to be imparted by you, the leader. Since this is a structured, educational approach, the presentations should not be deleted. You will want to enhance the content with your own examples. For some sessions, the major part of the presentation is given after the initial exercise. This is done to increase the effectiveness of the exercise.

Begin by explaining the symbol on the manual cover.

It is an abstraction of the Chinese symbol.

The sections are called the yin and the yang. The light side represents the good and positive things of life: health, love, friendship, financial security, etc.

The dark side represents the difficult things that occur in life: death, sickness, poverty, etc. We all have both sides in our lives. None of us has only positive things happen, even though it may seem that way to outsiders. Sometimes we look at others and say, "They have it so good. If only I had what they have." If we could get to know those persons well, we would discover that they have problems, too.

We cannot always control the external forces in our lives--illness, death, etc. What we can do is control how we react to them.

People react to external forces in different ways. A divorce can destroy one person and cause another to grow. Loss of a job can defeat one person and cause another to strive harder. What determines how we react to external circumstances? What makes one person a winner and another a loser? It is the person's self-image. Each of us has developed within ourselves a picture of how we see ourselves, a photograph. When we look at that photograph we see such things as pretty, unattractive, intelligent, dumb, capable, or inadequate. That picture is called our self-image. We read the picture and act accordingly.

Here is an example of how it works. (All examples are taken from actual situations given by women who have taken the course.)

A young woman gets married. She has been taught that "a good girl" is always kind and helpful and never speaks up in her own defense to those to whom she feels she owes respect. Her mother-in-law comes to visit and doesn't like the furniture. She goes out and buys a bookcase and chair for the couple. Because of the good and kind image the young woman has of herself, she cannot inform her mother-in-law of her dissatisfaction. The mother-in-law continues this action from time to time over the years. The younger woman could not change her actions toward the older woman until she had changed how she viewed herself.

When we are infants we learn who we are and how to think about ourselves through actions. We cry and mother picks us up; we learn we are important to her. Our actions begin to determine our self-image. As we grow older, the process begins to reverse itself. Our self-image determines our actions. I go to school and see myself as being able to draw. When I draw at home, mother loves it. When I draw in school, the teacher criticizes me and tells me she doesn't like it. I begin to feel inadequate. Gradually I stop drawing. My self-image determines my actions.

The purpose of this course is to enable you to discover that inner source which allows you to control your life, that inner source which allows you to tap your own happiness potential. That inner source is a positive self-image.

Exercise I.* The women should be in groups of four or five. Distribute the worksheet, and have each woman fill it in, silently, using descriptive words and phrases to complete the statements.

The kind of woman I am	The kind of woman I want to be

After the worksheets are completed, have each woman put a check beside any word in the first column that is negative. If she has a high percentage of checks, it is an indication that she has a poor self-image. Have each woman then read her list to her group and answer the questions "Why do I have so many negatives or positives?" and "How can I get to be the woman I want to be?" Have each woman change the negative statements to positive ones.

Examples: "I'm shy" - "It is good for a woman to be able to express opinions"

"I'm old" - "I'm experienced"

Many of the women will be shy this first day. Be careful to ensure that each woman gets her turn and that no one dominates. The woman who is shy will encourage the dominator to take over, and it is your responsibility as leader to see that this does not happen.

Rules for Discussion. These should be read to all the women.

1. No judging or disapproving. Learn to let others have their opinions.
2. No interrupting. Learn to be a good listener.
3. Comment, but do not give advice. Be aware that others must make their own decisions.
4. Speak in terms of "I." Learn not to generalize.
5. Respect the privacy of others. Do not repeat what you hear.

---

*Each session contains one or two exercises and corresponding worksheets. The worksheets are grouped at the end of each session in this manual and can be photocopied for the participants.

Exercise II. This exercise can be used instead of the first one or along with the first one if there is time. It is less personal than the first, and therefore can be less threatening for the first session.

We receive our image of who we are both from our family and from society in general. Sometimes it is difficult to decide which is which.

Have the group list the stereotypic ideas our society has about:

Women; Age; Being Single, Married, Widowed, Divorced

Ask the women how many of these ideas are negative and how many they have accepted.

Examples would be: "I can't do that because I'm too old," or "I can't go there because I don't have a man to take me."

Conclusion. The process we are about to undertake during these sessions is one of re-education. We have all been taught to believe negative things about ourselves. Our purpose is to re-educate ourselves to begin to get in touch with our strengths and to stop concentrating on our weaknesses.

SESSION I

Participant's Sheet
Chart I

The kind of woman I am	The kind of woman I want to be

SESSION II

DISCOVERING THE ROOTS

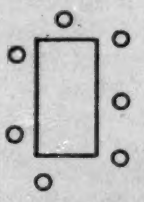
Icebreaker. Have the women discuss the following questions with one another: What piece of furniture are you most like? What piece of furniture would you like to be?

Presentation. Last week we discussed some stereotypes we as women have received from society. Today I would like to go back and do an exercise that will help you discover the image you received of yourself from your family. We do this exercise only to help you gain more insight into the kind of self-image you have today. It is not my intention to resolve and analyze everything that has happened to you in the past. Once you get a clearer idea of the picture you have of yourself, you can work on changing the negative aspects of it or strengthening the weak points.

At one time it was believed that as adults we could not change. Once we were formed, that was it! Psychologists are now discovering that we change, grow, and learn all during our lives. With knowledge and motivation you can become the kind of person you want to become, regardless of your age.

Exercise I. Provide worksheets and crayons or colored markers for each table. Draw a shape in the center of the paper that represents your family table when you were a child between the ages of five and fifteen (a circle, a square, etc.). Color the table one or two colors that represent the mood of your family during those years. An example would be as follows: You may have had a happy childhood, so you would color the table a bright color. But maybe there was a death of a family member that made one or two years very sad; then you may want to color a section of your table a dark color. Around the table place a circle for each person who lived in your house at the time. Color them according to the personality of the individual.

Put yourself in the picture.



Ask the women to form groups of four or five each. Give each woman an opportunity to explain her table to the other women and to answer the questions "Who made me feel good about myself?" "Who made me feel inadequate?" and "How are these messages affecting me today?"

Conclusion. Use the diagram on the worksheet or draw one of your own on the board as you give the following explanation. The picture we all have of ourselves (refer to diagram), whether we see ourselves as strong or weak, failures or successes--this self-identification--began very early in our lives. The seed represents the person at birth. Inside each of us, when we were born, were numerous strengths and positive attributes. During the growth process, one of two things happened. Either we were encouraged to develop our strengths, to trust ourselves and to let our personalities show, or we were discouraged and taught to mistrust ourselves and hide our true personalities from others. An early example of this is when children begin to crawl or walk and want to explore the world in which they live. Children who are encouraged to explore will begin to experience their own strength and to identify themselves apart from their surroundings. If a mother is overcautious and fearful of fingermarks or of the child falling or getting into things, she is teaching the child, through her attitude, to be fearful and mistrustful. This process continues all during the years we are developing.

We have a built-in world view as a result of childhood experiences. If those experiences were negative, it is the job of the adult to rid himself or herself of them. This process can be difficult, but it is possible.

Getting back to the diagram, if children are encouraged and loved, their positive qualities will develop and they will be well-rounded and control of their life situation. Children will then trust their own judgment and develop a sound value system. The flower in full bloom represents this stage. In this course we use the phrase "psychological maturity" to mean that stage when our basic feelings about ourselves are not determined by others, when we are not at the mercy of outside forces to build our self-image, and when that ability comes from within us.

At this point the person is ready to give back to others, to encourage and love others. We cannot give to others when we are unhappy with ourselves. The seeded flower represents this stage. Unless it grew up tall and strong, it could not develop seeds.

This course is based on the premise that we can change the childhood image we have of ourselves. All our actions, feelings, behaviors, and abilities are consistent with that image. We literally cannot act other than the way we imagine ourselves. If you consider yourself a failure, you will be one. If you consider yourself unlikable, you will have a hard time making friends. You will act according to the person you conceive yourself to be.

[Note to Facilitator: Some women leave the session feeling guilty about the fact that they may have said something incriminating concerning one of their parents, or that they have negative feelings toward one of their parents. You should therefore inform the group that guilt feelings are normal and that participants should not try to deny them. This is the beginning of a very important process that gives the women permission to deal in a more positive way with dependent parental relationships.]

Closing Exercise. Have the women complete one of the following sentences on the worksheet:

> I have been programmed by society and my family to believe . . . .
>
> The basic image I have of myself is . . . .
> Then have them consider what parts of this image they want to change.

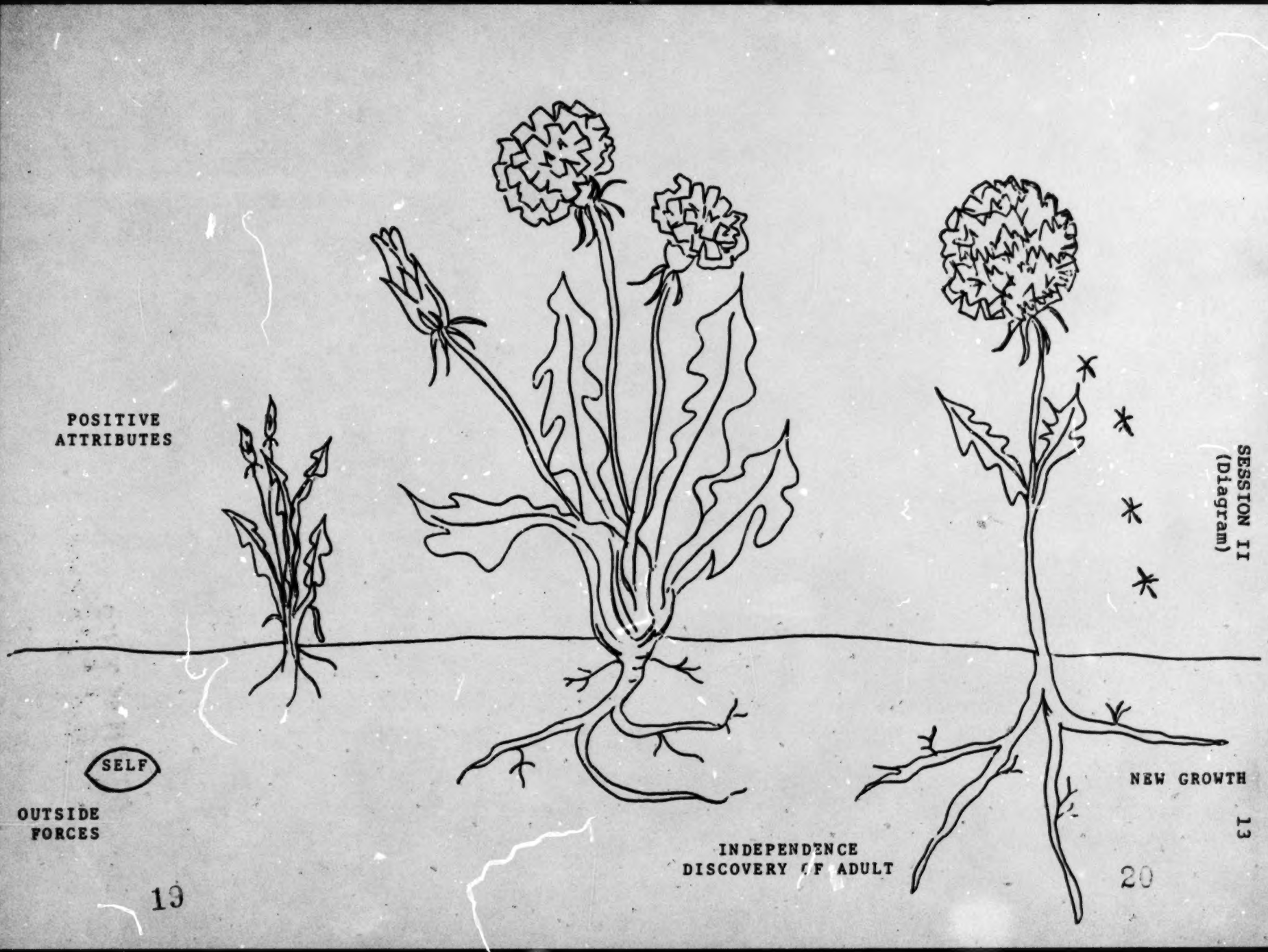
Homework. Beginning this week, the women should be given home assignments. Remind them that the more effort they put into the process, the greater the rewards will be.

Have the women trace their thoughts each day. How many times did they have a negative thought? a positive thought?

SESSION II

Participant's Sheet
Chart I

FAMILY TABLE


POSITIVE
ATTRIBUTES
SELF
OUTSIDE
FORCES
INDEPENDENCE
DISCOVERY OF ADULT
NEW GROWTH
SESSION II
(Diagram)
13

SESSION II

Participant's Sheet
Chart II

I have been programmed by society and my family to believe I am:

The basic image I have of myself is:

SESSION III

PUTTING YOURSELF IN CONTROL

Introduction. Ask the group what happened when they tried to trace their negative and positive thoughts. Ask them what some of their negative thoughts were and how they could turn them into positive thoughts.

Presentation. There are two kinds of self-destructive images that are common among women. One is the little girl image; the other is the doormat.

The woman who thinks of herself as a little girl was taught early in life that the way to get her rewards is to remain perpetually dependent on others. If she shows any independence, she believes people, especially men, will dislike her. She has opinions, but seldom expresses them; she hardly ever takes the initiative to do anything on her own. She expects others to make her happy and usually smothers anyone with whom she has a close relationship. Her knight in shining armor will take care of everything. She experiences a major crisis when her children grown up and leave home. As she grows older she may develop fears. Some common ones are fear of driving, riding in planes, and making decisions. The little girl manipulates and finds it difficult to give unless she is going to receive something in return. Most of us have some of the little girls in us. Those who are little girls in the extreme are very unhappy.

The other image many women have of themselves is that of a doormat or servant. This woman believes that it is her responsibility to do for everyone, to make everyone happy. When something goes wrong she always blames herself. She tries to change to meet the demands of each person she comes in contact with and always puts herself last. She allows people to take advantage of her. She will eventually resent those around her because they take her for granted. We frequently see this woman being physically abused by her husband, blaming herself and excusing him. This woman finds it difficult to leave an alcoholic husband. This is the woman who, when promoted on the job, cannot stop making coffee for everyone. She thinks she can gain approval by being a servant.

In the case of the "little girl," the woman can say no to others, but is caught when others say no to her. She can't do anything for herself. In the second case, the individual cannot allow herself to say no. She has to do everything.

Exercise I. Have the women identify someone they have difficulty saying no to. Have the group help each woman decide why she has difficulty with refusals. Role play how each woman would deal with that person without losing.

You will find that it is so foreign to some women to say no that they cannot even do it in a role-playing situation. Many of them will need a lot of encouragement.

Exercise II. Try to get both exercises in during this session. Exercise II is not an alternate exercise.

Have the women fill out the worksheet marked:

I have to	I can't

Have the women write down all the things that come to mind when they hear the words "I have to." What are all the things they feel they have to do? Have them complete the "I can't" side in the same manner.

After the women have filled out the worksheet, have them change the words "I have to" to "I choose to," and "I can't" to "I can if I choose to."

Discuss the idea that if we really want to change our lives, we can. It is unproductive to blame those around us for the position we are in. We cannot wait for others to motivate us. We must do that for ourselves. We are responsible if we make ourselves a servant. We are also responsible for changing the situation if we do not like it.

We all know people who are very unhappy. We try to do as much as we can for them. We keep trying and trying but it never seems to help.

There is a certain amount of happiness that has to come from within. Without it we cannot receive the happiness that others can give us. No one else can make us truly happy, either. That basic feeling has to come from inside the individual.

Within you, whoever you may be, regardless of how big a failure you may think yourself to be, is the ability and the power to do whatever you need to do to be happy and successful. Within you right now is the power to do things you never dreamed possible. This power becomes available to you as soon as you can change your beliefs of "I can't" and "I'm not worthy" to "I can" and "I deserve to be respected.

Next, read "Cherish Yourself" from the worksheet, and encourage the women to take the page home and put it somewhere where they can see it.

Homework. Encourage the women to take a risk and stand up to someone they have difficulty saying no to. Caution them not to choose the most difficult person first, but to get some practice before they confront the person they feel will be the most difficult.

[Note to Facilitator: In some cases, the self-image can be changed by action, as is done in the behavioristic approach. This is why we encourage the women to take risks and try new behaviors. The key to whether they can allow themselves to take that step is often the permission they are given by the group or by you, the leader, i.e., "I can look on myself as being good if I change this behavior." Without that permission, little risk taking will occur.]

SESSION III

Participant's Sheet
Chart I

I have to	I can't

SESSION III

Participant's Sheet

CHERISH YOURSELF

CHERISH YOURSELF

because you were created

because you are a woman

because you have a contribution to make to society

because you have the ability to make others happy

CHERISH YOURSELF

by walking proud and tall

by speaking your opinions

by being the master of your fate

by never allowing another the power to destroy you emotionally

Those who truly cherish and appreciate themselves will live their lives more fully, form more meaningful relationships, and possess an inner strength that will allow them to deal effectively with the difficulties encountered in life.

For your own sake and that of those you love,

CHERISH YOURSELF

SESSION IV

THE IMPORTANCE OF HONEST COMMUNICATION

Introduction. Give the women an opportunity to share any risk taking that occurred during the week.

Presentation. One of the most destructive images a woman can have of herself is "I'm a good person only if everyone likes me." This woman falls apart when someone expresses displeasure with what she is doing. She usually feels guilty when she cannot make others happy and tries to change to meet their needs. She is like a piece of clay, constantly being reshaped: if you reshape the clay too often, it falls apart.

The woman who sees herself as someone who has to please everyone usually has difficulty communicating. She cannot honestly express her feelings to others, especially negative ones. Her attitude is "I'll be quiet so I can keep the peace," or "If I say that I will hurt the other person." This woman does not deal with problems at the appropriate time. She holds everything in and it usually comes out in angry outbursts at a later time, or it can eventually cause depression, a nervous breakdown, or resentment of those around her.

For example, Jimmy Smith asks his mother if he can go visit a friend. Mrs. Smith says no, because he has to cut the grass, and Jimmy cries and says she doesn't love him. She feels guilty and gives in. She cuts the grass herself but is angry because she has to do it. When Jimmy wants her to help him with homework that night, she refuses. Her husband accuses her of being a neglectful mother. She gets angry with everyone and leaves the house. They wonder why she is so angry about being asked to help with homework. If she had been able to deal with the first issue, the second would not have occurred.

A healthy attitude to acquire is that it is impossible to please everyone. You shouldn't try to change your personality to meet everyone's needs. There will be times when you have to do things people won't like.

When a woman learns to deal with issues at the appropriate time, she begins to respect herself and thus becomes less angry and depressed.

Exercise I. Have each woman identify someone, other than a male partner, with whom she is in conflict. We will deal specifically with spouses or other males with whom participants have close relationships in the next two sessions.

Role play:

1. Choose the issue you need to settle with the person.
2. Decide how you can tell that person what you are feeling without putting him or her down.
3. Practice with a partner what you would say.
4. Practice listening to what the other person has to say.

For example, your boss asks you to work overtime at least three nights a week. She never asks anyone else and you do not get paid for the extra time. You want to practice telling your boss how you feel about the situation without saying what an unfair person she is.

Allow enough time so that each woman has an opportunity to role play. Demonstrate a role play first.

Conclusion. Most of our communication patterns are learned. This means that we can unlearn them. There is great freedom in being able to deal honestly with people. When we learn that skill, we usually respect ourselves more, and that frees us to respect others because we no longer feel they are controlling our lives.

We have covered only one aspect of effective communication. It would take a whole course to cover everything. For more helpful hints, read the worksheet on communication.

When we feel positive about ourselves, we are better able to recognize positives in others. Think of two or three people with whom you have a close relationship. When was the last time you gave them any positive feedback?

Exercise II. Ask the women to form groups of five each. Have the women list their positive attributes. Encourage each woman to list at least ten things she likes about herself. Use the worksheet "My Positive Attributes." Most women will have difficulty listing ten attributes. After the women have completed their lists, have them read to the other group members what they have written.

Encourage them to sit tall, read the list with a strong voice, and use the words "I am" or "I can" to begin each sentence.

For example, "I am a good cook," or "I am a good friend to others." With a small group, you may want to have each woman stand in front of her group and read the list.

After each woman has completed her reading, have each member of the group tell every other member something she likes about that person. The woman being told is not permitted to say anything but thank you.

For example, "Mary, you seem to be very intelligent. You express yourself well. I like that in a woman." Mary would reply, "Thank you."

Homework. Choose someone with whom you are having difficulty and try to deal honestly with him or her.

[Note to Facilitator: Caution the women that they should not be discouraged if the situation doesn't work out exactly as they would like. Sometimes this happens when we are practicing new skills. If the first attempt is unsuccessful, participants should try again.]

SESSION IV

Participant's Sheet
Chart I

INEFFECTIVE METHODS OF COMMUNICATING

1. Anything that implies that you are a better judge of what is right for other people than they themselves are
   a. Giving orders
   b. Making threats
   c. Moralizing or giving advice
2. Anything that puts the other person down
   a. Criticizing
   b. Passing judgment
   c. Ridiculing
   d. Blaming
   e. Name calling
3. Anything that says "I don't want to deal with you now" or "I'm afraid to deal with you now"
   a. Ignoring
   b. Distracting
   c. Withdrawing
   d. Humoring

All of the above, when used on other people, cause them to stop communicating. Which ones do you use?

SESSION IV

Participant's Sheet
Chart II

POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES

SESSION V

PUTTING MALE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE: PART 1

Introduction. Have the women report on any success they have had being assertive. If the group consists of all married, separated, divorced, or widowed women, begin with the statement "When I got married, I thought . . ." Go around the room quickly and have each woman complete the statement without discussion. After everyone has responded, you may have a discussion or simply move on to the following exercise.

Exercise I. Fantasy Trip [This is recommended only for married women or for those in long-term relationships.]

Have the participants relax, close their eyes, and picture how it would be if suddenly they had no friends, parents, children, husband or other male partner, home, job (if they are presently working), etc. Mention each item slowly and give them time to think.

Use words such as "I'm going to take away your friends. You now have no friends. Where are you? What are you doing?"

When the fantasy trip is over, have participants discuss how they felt at the various stages and where they were at the end.

Presentation. A woman cannot really form a satisfying relationship with a man until she loves and respects herself. The secret of a good relationship is the ability of both people to have respect for and confidence in themselves, and because of that, to respect and have to capacity to give to another.

Many women have the attitude that they are not a complete or worthwhile person until they are attached to a man--until he has given his stamp of approval.

When women feel inadequate about their abilities to make it on their own, or view themselves only as an appendage of a man, they will often stay in relationships that are destructive. This applies to both married and single women. Many talented single women agonize for years over the fact that they have not married. How often have you heard the question "What is wrong with me?"

A woman who feels this way needs to develop the attitude that she is an individual, whole and complete, apart from any man she may be associated with.

A woman who is insecure tends to make demands on her partner that are harmful to the relationship. She will expect her partner to make her happy, keep her life interesting, etc. If this does not happen, she resents the other person.

Exercise I. Answer the questions on the basis of present or past relationships.

1. In which two areas have I grown since I have been in this relationship? (In which two areas did I grow when I was in this relationship?)
2. What things did I used to do that I am now afraid to do? (What things did I become afraid to do?)
3. What activities have I stopped doing? (What activities did I stop doing?)
4. What new things have I tried since I have been in this relationship? (What new things did I try when I was in this relationship?)
5. Do I give more than I receive? (Did I give more than I received?
6. Do I receive more than I give? (Did I receive more than I gave?)
7. Do I feel that most of my rights have been taken away? (Did I feel that most of my rights had been taken away?)
8. Do I feel taken advantage of? (Did I feel taken advantage of?)
9. Does the idea of living alone frighten me? (Did the idea of living alone frighten me?)

Ask the women to form groups, and have them discuss their answers.

Conclusion. The first four questions give you some indication of whether or not you have grown, or did grow, as an individual during this relationship.

Questions 5 through 9 indicate your ability to have your rights recognized in the relationship.

If you are in a relationship in which you are not growing, you should first examine your own actions to see whether by changing them you can improve the relationship.

If you make your best effort and the other person refuses to cooperate, you have to ask yourself if this relationship should last.

If you have been in a relationship for a number of years and you want to change some of your acitons, you will increase your chances of succeeding by letting the other person know how you are feeling and what the person can expect.

Exercise II. Have participants answer the following question:

In order to respect myself more, what behavior do I have to change in relationship to men?

Homework. If you need to, try a new behavior with your partner.

SESSION VI

PUTTING MALE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE: PART 2

Continuation of Session V

Introduction. Go around the group and have each woman complete the following statement: Something in my life I have done that I am proud of is . . .

Have the women discuss any patterns they have tried to change.

Presentation. [Note to Facilitator: The issues concerning the relationship between men and women are so complex that it is often necessary to devote two sessions to the topic. The second session might simply be an open discussion on problems the group would like to talk about. You can use the material below if you need to stimulate the discussion. If you feel your group does not want a second session on male-female relationships, let them pick a topic that interests them and discuss it.]

Exercise I (optional). Use the worksheet. Ask participants to check the statements they think are true:

1. Men are generally more knowledgeable than women.
2. I prefer a man who likes to make most of the decisions.
3. I have difficulty disagreeing with men.
4. I have difficulty expressing my opinion in a group of men.
5. It is often the wife's fault if the husband drinks.
6. It is often the husband's fault if the wife drinks.
7. Women are not liked if they show they are intelligent and capable.
8. In an argument with a man, I always give in.
9. I feel guilty if I say no when the man in my life wants sex.

Tally the answers. Have the group discuss the results. Have the women then list what they think are healthy attitudes toward men. Add the following if they are not on the list.

1. She knows she is more intelligent than, or equally intelligent as, some men.
2. She has the ability to make most decisions on her own.
3. She realizes that the responsibility for her happiness lies within herself.
4. She knows that when he is unhappy it is not always her fault or her responsibility to make him happy.
5. She is able to express her negative feelings.
6. She knows she can do some things better than he can and she is not afraid to let him know that.
7. She can express her sexual needs and say no when she doesn't want to have sex.

Ask the women to choose any of the points they feel they need to work on. Have the group help individuals with suggestions about what they might do to improve on those points.

Exercise II (optional). We all grow up believing in myths. A common one is "All mothers love their babies." The areas of love and marriage seem to be surrounded by myths. Because of this, women often expect more out of love and marriage than they should. When their expectations are not met, they often become depressed. Some of these myths are:

1. People get married because they are in love.
2. The person I marry will never change.
3. People grow up when they leave home.
4. People become more intimate when they live together.

Attitudes which would help are:

1. I can be a complete woman without marriage. Therefore, I should not marry for security or approval. I should marry only if I meet someone I can love.
2. We change all during our adult years. I should expect the person I marry to grow and change.
3. Most adults do not mature until they are past 30. If a woman marries young and becomes too dependent on her husband, she may never mature.
4. Intimacy comes only when two people work at it. Living together does not help unless the individuals are communicating.

Conclusion. There is no special exercise for the conclusion of this session. It may be useful to review with participants what they have learned from Sessions V and VI about their relationships with men.

SESSION VI

Participant's Sheet
Chart I

MALE - FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS

Check those statements you think are true.

1. Men are generally more knowledgeable than women.
2. I prefer a man who likes to make most of the decisions.
3. I have difficulty disagreeing with men.
4. I have difficulty expressing my opinion in a group of men.
5. It is often the wife's fault if the husband drinks.
6. It is often the husband's fault if the wife drinks.
7. Women are not liked if they show they are intelligent and capable.
8. When arguing with a man I always give in.
9. I feel guilty if I say no when the man in my life wants sex.

SESSION VIII

CRAWLING OUT OF YOUR COCOON

Introduction. Review the material that has been covered so far by going over the list of positive and negative attitudes listed on the worksheet. Encourage the women to take this opportunity to ask questions or make comments on any of the material that has been discussed up to this time.

Presentation. All of us have fears we need to contend with--fears of spiders, driving, speaking in public. The presence of fears is not always a sign of abnormality. Sometimes we may not want to deal with them because they do not interfere with our lives. You may have a fear of snakes, but how often do you see a snake? Some fears you may want to deal with because they do interfere with your life. You may need special help with some of those. There are counseling programs you can go to for that purpose. However, some fears can be dealt with by the individual, without a counselor.

Many times the reason we withdraw from trying something new is fear of failure: "I won't try for a new job, because I might not get it" or "I won't go on a trip alone, because I might get lost or not know whom to tip or how to pay the bill." The fear of failure keeps many of us from enjoying ourselves, developing our talents, and accomplishing the tasks we are capable of.

The mistake most of us make is not in trying or in failing, but in the attitude we have toward failing. Failure should be viewed as a learning process. "What did I learn from this experience? How can I be a success at it in the future?" We will never experience the reward if we are not willing to take the risk.

There is another aspect of fear pertaining especially to homemakers. Every profession has hazards specific to its own type of work. For people in management, the hazard is stress; for bus drivers, it is back problems; for mental health workers, it is burn-out. The hazard of homemaking is gradual withdrawal. When a woman is at home raising a family, it is easier for her to begin to withdraw from the world than it is for a woman who is working outside the home. The process is gradual, and often the homemaker does not notice it for many years. She may gradually stop driving long distances; then, she won't go anywhere outside the neighborhood alone. In its extreme, this woman won't even go out of the house.

This problem may manifest itself in an unwillingness to try new things or to take on new responsibilities. She won't balance the checkbook, try a new sport, or go out at night alone. Her world becomes smaller and smaller, until she is barely functioning as an individual.

The road back from this experience is slow, but an individual can be helped at any stage. The ideal would be to educate young women who want to stay home and raise a family so that they do not allow themselves to get into this situation.

Exercise I. Have each woman choose something she has failed at in the past and would like to succeed at, but is afraid to try. Or have her choose something new she would like to do, but is afraid to try.

Ask the group to complete the following, using the worksheet:

1. What strengths do you have that will help you to do what you want?
2. Draw up a plan of action. What is the first step you have to take? the second?
3. Set up a timetable.

Ask the women to form small groups and have them discuss the topic. They can help one another decide on a plan of action.

Exercise II. The women have had time to do a great deal of thinking about themselves in the last seven weeks. Now they will be given the opportunity to write a statement of belief about themselves, a creed. This should be a statement of strength about themselves.

You can, if you wish, give out copies of the booklet Readings* to the women to let them see what other women have written. Then have each woman write a similar statement about herself, using the worksheet for this exercise.

Give each woman an opportunity to read her statement to the group.

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*A 10-page unpublished booklet containing statements of belief written by former participants. Available upon request to Lorraine Rea, 399 McClellan Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15236.

SESSION VII

Participant's Sheet
Chart I

OVERCOMING FEARS

What strengths do you have that will help you to do what you want?

Plan of action

Timetable

SESSION VII

Participant's Sheet
Chart II

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES	POSITIVE ATTITUDES
I always depend on others	I am capable of doing many things on my own
I have no identity of my own	I am a person in my own right
I depend on others to make me happy	I know I am responsible for my own happiness
Others motivate me	I motivate myself
I never express my true feelings	I communicate honestly
I am afraid to use my talents	I recognize my talents and use them
I let others make all my decisions	I take responsibility for my own decisions
I try to please everyone	I know I cannot please everyone
I cannot give to others	I know how to give as well as receive
I cannot receive from others	I know how to receive as well as give

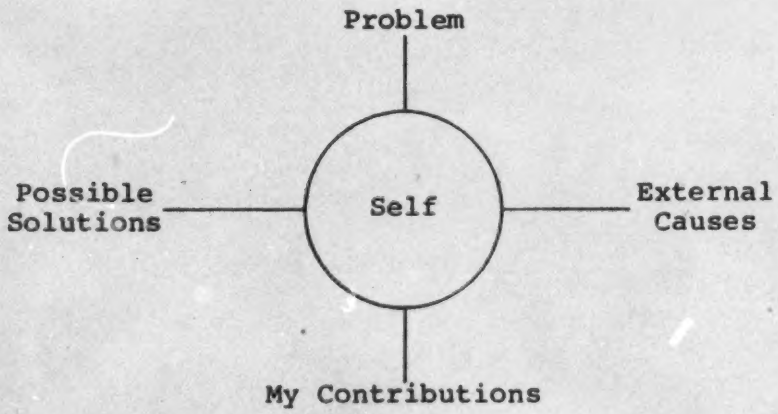
SESSION VIII

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Introduction. Have each woman answer the question "What will it take for me to become a positive person?"

If it seems appropriate, you may want to have a general discussion among the women on any topic of interest to them, thus providing a relaxed atmosphere for the final session. If you wish to do that, do not exclude the initial question in this session or the closing exercise.

If you wish to have a more structured session, use the following:



Distribute the worksheet. Have the women choose a problem they are presently dealing with; for example, "I hate my job."

Ask the women to consider the external causes; for example, "I'm always given too much work. It's impossible to complete it."

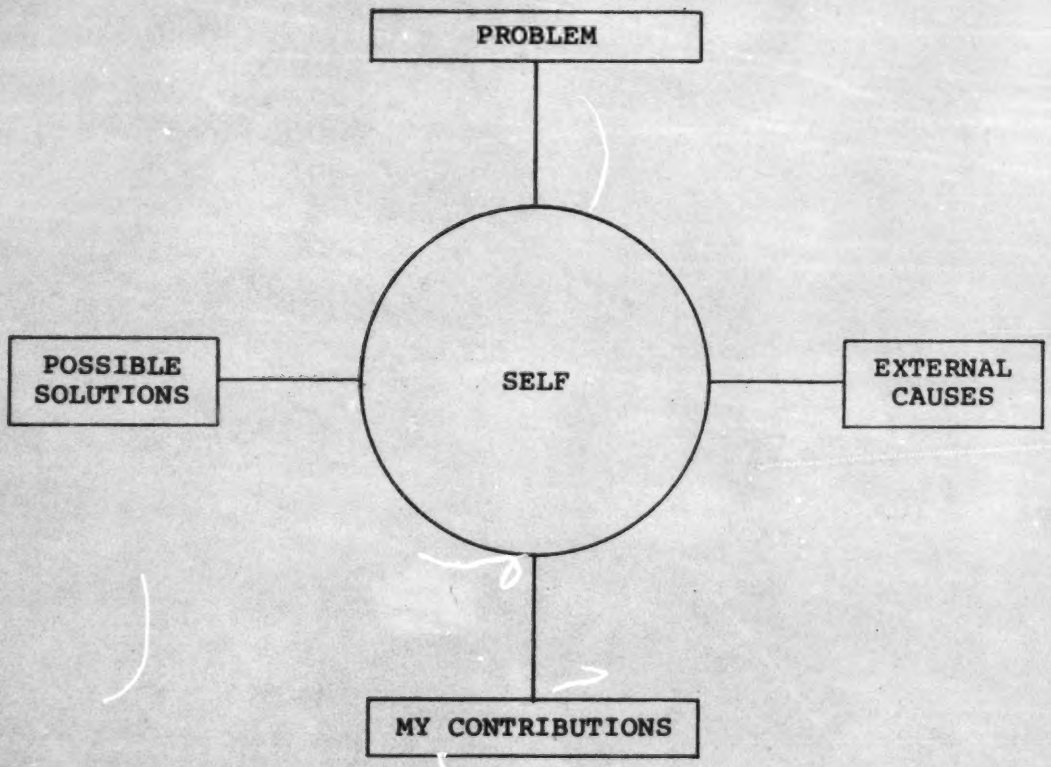
Next, ask them to consider their contributions to the problem; for example, "I cannot tell others I have no time to talk when they approach me. I'm afraid to discuss the problems with my boss."

Finally, ask the women to examine possible solutions. Have them list as many as possible. Ask them to consider what will happen if the problem is not solved.

Concluding Exercise. Ask the women to form small groups. Have them think of something they would like to give one another. Have each woman make a wish for every other woman in the group.

SESSION VIII

Participant's Sheet
Chart I



APPENDIX

Evaluation Material

INITIAL RESULTS OF SURVEY ON "THE WOMAN WITHIN" COURSE

In the fall of 1978, research began on the self-image course we had been conducting for five years. Three-hundred twenty-nine evaluation sheets were sent out, 120 returned. The information below is taken from those sheets which were returned.

Ninety-two percent of those reporting stated that they had made some changes in their lives within three months after taking the course. These positive changes persisted for at least six months after taking the course.

Those changes included going back to school or to work, starting new projects, making more time for themselves, and being more assertive with their husbands.

More changes were reported in 10 of 11 categories at least six months later than were reported soon after the course. The trend is decidedly against erosion of change over time.

Participants also reported that changes occurred in their attitudes and abilities after taking the course. Of 10 questions on attitudes and abilities, participants reported changes in a positive direction in all 10. Those attitudes and abilities included more self-confidence, assertiveness, and ability to make decisions, to relax, and to feel more in control of one's own life.

It was not necessary for participants to return to work or school in order to feel better, but women who reported making no change (8) also reported no changes in attitude toward themselves. Most members of this group started out with reported high self-confidence. Most of the other participants, however, started out with generally lower attitudes of self-confidence. Those whose attitudes improved also reported making some kind of personal changes.

In sum, it can be reported that participation in the course was correlated with making lasting changes that were positive in nature. The older participants, and especially those taking classes in more recent years, were more likely to report greater benefits.

OPTIONAL COURSE EVALUATION MATERIAL

Pre- and Post-Course Questionnaires are included for the use of group leaders as an assessment and research instrument. They represent our abbreviated version of the research questionnaire given to participants in previous women's self-image courses.

Group leaders should administer the questionnaire prior to the initial group meeting and repeat it at the conclusion of the final meeting. Pre- and post-course comparisons can thus be made for individuals as well as for the class as a whole. Group leaders are urged to communicate with the author in order to share the data collected. The results of this sharing will enable the author to both validate the instrument and to develop a normative sample for use by future group leaders.

Please send results to Dr. Lawrence M. Glanz, 2800 Old Elizabeth Road, West Mifflin, PA 15122.

Pre-Course
Questionnaire for Participants

THE WOMAN WITHIN

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

AGE: _____ MARITAL STATUS: _____

HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED: High School 9 10 11 12 College 1 2 3 4 Post Graduate 1 2 3 4 5 6

FAMILY INCOME BRACKET: Under $5,000 $5,000-9,999 $10,000-14,999 $15,000-19,999 $20,000-24,999 $25,000 and up

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 0 1 2 3 4 more Ages: ___ ___ ___ ___

RELIGION: Protestant Catholic Jewish Other No Preference

DO YOU:
Live with Parents? Yes___ No___
Rent an Apartment? Yes___ No___
Own a House? Yes___ No___

Rate yourself on the following attitudes:

1. Ability to say no when I want to:

very poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 excellent

2. Attitude that it is I who control my life's course:

completely disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 completely agree

3. Ability to make important decisions for myself:

very poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 excellent

4. Attitude of confidence in my ability to solve problems:

very poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 excellent

5. Ability to relax:

very poor									excellent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

6. Attitude that I can feel good just being me:

completely disagree									completely agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

7. Ability to communicate with others, and to state my own feelings and opinions:

very poor									excellent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. Attitude of understanding and respect for men:

very negative									very positive
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Attitude of understanding and respect for other women:

very negative									very positive
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

10. Attitude of optimism and hope as opposed to depression and despair:

very negative									very positive
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Post-Course
Questionnaire for Participants

THE WOMAN WITHIN

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Rate yourself on the following attitudes and abilities since taking the course:

1. Ability to say no when I want to:

very poor excellent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Attitude that it is I who control my life's course:

completely disagree completely agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Ability to make important decisions for myself:

very poor excellent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Attitude of confidence in my ability to solve problems:

very poor excellent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Ability to relax:

very poor excellent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Attitude that I can feel good just being me:

completely disagree completely agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Ability to communicate with others, and to state my own feelings and opinions:

very poor excellent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Attitude of understanding and respect for men:

very negative very positive
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Attitude of understanding and respect for other women:

very negative very positive
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Attitude of optimism and hope as opposed to depression and despair:

very negative very positive
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PERSONAL CHANGES: Since taking this course, I have made the following changes:

1. Went back to school
2. Went to work (approximate income: _____)
3. Scheduled more time for my own pursuits
4. Became more assertive with my husband.
5. Became more assertive with a parent or in-law
6. Became more assertive elsewhere
7. Started a project
8. Improved my physical well-being (more exercise, weight loss, stopped smoking, etc.)
9. Made an important decision for myself
10. Other
11. No significant change occurred

Have you made any other positive changes since taking the course?

_____

_____

_____

What was the most helpful thing you learned?_____

_____

_____

_____

How could the class have been improved?_____

_____

_____

_____

How effective was the leader at:

	poor	fair	good	excellent
1. Communicating her ideas				
2. Conveying a sense of her own self-worth				
3. Serving as a positive role model				